METHODIST Peace Courier

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RECONCILIATION WITH GOD AND WITH MAN

Scripture

For He, Christ, is our peace -- He who has made Russians and Americans one, and in His own human nature has dissolved the "iron curtain," by setting aside the Law with its commandments, expressed, as they were in definite decrees. His design was to unite the two sections of humanity (neither of which is perfect) in Himself so as to form one new man, indeed one new world thus effecting peace, and to reconcile Russians and Americans in one body to God, by means of His cross -- slaying by it their mutual enmity. So He came and proclaimed good news of peace to you who are East, and peace to you who are West; because it is through Him that Easterners and Westerners alike have access through one Spirit to the Father.

Ephesians II-14:18

(Adaptation from the Weymouth Translation of the New Testament --C.F.B.Jr.)

THE CHURCHES AND THE WORLD COMMUNITY

"An international organization will always reflect conditions in the world community which it is designed to represent and to serve. It can be effective to the degree that its member governments can work together harmoniously. Here, as Christians, we have a responsibility to press our government to pursue policies and practices which will utilize every opportunity for cooperative action without betraying fundamental principle.

"Similarly, the effectiveness of the United Nations will be dependent upon the extent to which real world community exists -- a world community where people of different countries can have direct contact with each other and by processes of personal discussion can reach agreement or, where agreement is impossible, can come to a sympathetic understanding of each other's views. In this connection, Christians who are party to an ecumenical fellowship which recognizes no national frontiers have an even more direct responsibility to meet. They should do everything within their power to get people of different countries to meet face to face for a consideration of common purposes, be it in science, art, education, business, athletics, or religion.

"This is not merely an academic question, and it will take on vital significance in the very near future. The Second Assembly of the World Council of Churches is scheduled to meet at Evanston next August. Member churches are planning to send delegates from such countries as the Eastern Zone of Germany, Czechoslovakia, and Hungary. Whether viewed from the standpoint of faith and life within the churches, of the need to promote world community, or of the United States' potential contribution to world peace and justice, it is imperative that these delegates be admitted. While the pertinent federal law is restrictive, it does permit such admission and there is every reason to believe that the responsible officials in our government will comply fully with the intent and terms of the law in granting requests for admission.

"It is possible, although I trust it will not come to pass, that a quite limited number of people will become publicly critical of any move to admit to the United States Christians from countries behind the Iron Curtain. In that eventuality, enlightened public opinion must make itself heard and felt. As Christians in the United States, we want and we believe we have the right to cement a fellowship in faith with Christians of other lands. We are neither afraid nor ashamed to discuss our views on a Christian testimony to society with those who may hold different views. We are confident in the integrity and soundness of our positions and, at the same time, our minds are open to hear and to learn from others. We shall move along the pathway to world community not by building up but by tearing down iron curtains."

--Excerpt from an Address by Dr. O. Frederick Nolde, January 18, 1954, Ecumenical Press Service.

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HYMN OF RECONCILIATION

In Christ there is no East or West,
In Him no South or North;
But one great fellowship of love
Throughout the whole wide earth.
--John Oxenham

PRAYER OF RECONCILIATION

O thou, who art above all and in all, and in whose hand rests our destiny, forgive all our hates and prepare us to live in thy world with increasing usefulness made possible by the discoveries and inventions of mankind. Thou hast created us; thou wilt not leave us in the dust. Stay the hand of those who by false motive and wrong decision could bring us to global disaster. Good Lord of all men, dissolve away the iron and bamboo curtains in our hearts and unholy partitions which divide man from man. Strengthen, we pray, the fellowship of Christians across all our man-made boundaries. Hear our prayer for the people of Russia and for the Church within the boundaries of the Soviet Union. Hear our prayer for the Church in places far from us, whatever the political and social orders under which men live. We lift up to thee in our hearts the people of Asia that thy love and compassion may bless them. Raise up among us prophets whose insight and courage may so touch the conscience of mankind that our generation shall abolish the ancient evil of war, and shall beat our swords into plowshares and our spears into pruning hooks that nation shall not lift up sword against nation anymore. Restrain our tendencies toward self-righteousness, we pray. Breathe into us the spirit of humility and of love that our faith may be strengthened and our hope sustained. May thy spirit turn mankind from the temptation to use weapons of mass destruction for any purpose whatsoever and lead us rather into paths of the creative application of powers and inventions which through thy goodness to man, he possesses. So may the true kingdom of love, justice, and peace come on earth as it is in heaven, through Christ our Lord. Amen.

BRICKER AMENDMENT

At this writing, it appears that action upon the proposed Bricker Amendment to the Constitution will not be voted upon before you receive this issue of the METHODIST PEACE COURIER. We recognize, however, that some new move in Congress may mean that action will have been taken. By way of report, you should know that the Executive Secretary of the Board of World Peace sent approximately 1,000 letters with two enclosures bearing upon the issue to members of the Board of World Peace, chairmen of Conference Boards of World Peace, presidents of Methodist colleges and universities, staffs of Boards, Methodist editors, and the bishops.

The recommendation of the Executive Secretary has been that we oppose the Bricker Amendment. We believe President Eisenhower and Secretary of State Dulles have held to the right position that the existing powers between the executive, legislative, and judicial branches, as established by the Constitution, should not be changed. The proposed amendment, we believe, would be dangerous and would hamstring important treaties and executive agreements. There is a further consideration. Proponents of the measure have by various means revealed that their purpose constitutes indirectly a strong flank attack upon the United Nations and American responsibilities with reference to the United Nations. We believe the Bricker Amendment will fail to pass, and should fail. It is doubtful that any compromise measure is really needed. The Cleveland Conference adopted the following resolution:

"The principle of co-operation and mutual concern implicit in the moral order and essential to a just and durable peace, calls for a true community of nations. The United States can best insure its own peace and security by strengthening, and not weakening, the processes by which our nation exercises its rightful influence within the family of nations.

"The power of our government to negotiate treaties and to make executive agreements should be so maintained as to ensure a) that the United States will not be hampered in taking expeditious and effective action in fulfilling our responsibility as a member of the world community of nations and b) that the United States should be in a position to make its full contribution to the continuing development of international law and to bring international relations into greater harmony with the moral law. Convinced that adequate safeguards respecting the making of treaties and executive agreements are already provided, we express our opposition to any Constitutional amendment which would hamper our government in carrying forward and making effective a responsible foreign policy."

We agree with this position.

C.F.B.Jr.

Italians Urge Reconciliation with Yugoslavia

An entirely new and significant note has been struck by a substantial group of Italians who have published an appeal for reconciliation with Yugoslavia, based on an admission of Italy's wrongs to the Yugoslavs under Fascism. At the root of the Italo-Yugoslav crisis, they say, lies a hidden need -- a preliminary conciliation of minds to open the channels of human sympathy and to banish inveterate hatreds which have grown out of the material and moral aggressions against Yugoslavia during the days of Italian dictatorship and imperialism.

"In the First World War," the statement says, "Italians and Slavs, two young nations aspiring to a place in the concert of European countries, fought for the independence and liberty of their lands against the Austro-Hungarian Empire. But in the early post-war period, Fascism aimed at getting back from Yugoslavia the Dalmatian region already bartered with Fiume in the Rapallo Treaty; and when Hitler invaded Yugoslavia, Italy occupied a portion of it, plundering the country and slaughtering unarmed people.

"Such behavior was too grave a perversion of normal human relations for restoration to come from a bare diplomatic document imposed by the conquering nations, styled as a 'peace treaty.' What was required to rebuild relations at the highest spiritual level was an official avowal of penitence by the offender. By such means, England restored cordial relations with Ireland and India, and some gains have been made in the relations between Germany and Israel by German acknowledgment of the wrongs perpetrated against the Jews and the payment of indemnities. The cordial relations between Italy and France after World War II were due in large measure to the patient fellowship of small groups in both nations.

"The Italians, however, after the fall of Fascism, have failed to make amends for their wrongs to the Yugoslavs, limiting themselves to protests over Tito's acts of revenge. It is our belief that in a cleared atmosphere, the union of unintoxicated minds might produce -- on the principle of nationality in the distribution of disputed territories -- a settlement that might work. The present Italian indignation against any attempt upon the Italian character of Trieste has, indeed, a legitimate basis; but should not we Italians have felt an equal indignation when Mussolini trampled on the independence and freedom of Croatia? Mazzini bequeathed to us the great teaching that other peoples' fatherlands are not less sacred than one's own.

"If Italy, as would be right and honorable, took the first step, both Italians and Yugoslavs might still find a path to reconciliation and peaceful neighborliness."

--From WORLD INTERPRETER
February 5, 1954.

COLLEGIANS IN RUSSIA

"For many years some congressional investigators have tried to create the impression that American college campuses are hotbeds of communism. This type of slander has been refuted time and again, but there are still some uninformed people who choose to believe it.

"Recently seven American college students spent three weeks touring Russia. They saw communism at work first-hand, talked to many Russians in various walks of life, studied living conditions closely, and have reported their findings to the American people...

"All of the students are happy to be back home. Their exposure to communism did not make Communists of them. On the contrary, while they are better informed about the communistic system, they infinitely prefer our system to the Russian.

"If our colleges were indeed hotbeds of communism, it would seem only logical that the students should have come back -- or perhaps even remained in Russia -- as wild-eyed converts to the Communist cause.

"The truth is that American universities and colleges are a bulwark against communism, because they teach and demonstrate the difference between our way of life and the Communist way. The average college student knows that ours is the better system for human welfare..."

--Reprinted from the Chicago Sun-Times,
dated February 2, 1954.

LEGISLATIVE BRIEFS

1. Proposed Bricker Amendment. Almost certainly will be defeated. Possibly without any type of amendment.

2. Universal Military Training. As stated in the January COURIER, UMT is dead, at least for this session of Congress. It is not slated to be introduced in this session. We should keep alert and informed on proposals for the Reserve system. The Board of World Peace will alert and lead in opposition to any renewed efforts to impose UMT on the American people.

3. Reciprocal Trade Agreements Act. The Act was extended to June 30, 1954. The position of the Board of World Peace and of the National Council of Churches over a period of years has been in favor of the extension of this Act, be-

lieving it helps to create economic conditions which support international peace.

4. The United Nations. An earlier trend toward attack upon the U.N. has now turned to a swelling tide of support, yet not enough. Our recommendations are that we educate our people with reference to the ratification of the Genocide Convention, the Covenant on Human Rights, larger financial support from the United States to the U.N., a larger proportion of American funds made available through the U.N. Technical Assistance Program, and much larger financial concern in the matter of United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund. This year and next year there should be a wider study of the problems of a Charter review conference with possible Charter revision. We urge larger utilization by the United States of the specialized agencies of the U.N.: FAO, WHO, ILO, etc.

5. Universal Disarmament. We should continue to press for simultaneous universal disarmament under the United Nations with effective international controls, including inspection, etc.

6. Immigration Legislation. Revised and more liberal immigration policy is imperative. The McCarran-Walters Act should be revised.

More information on proposed legislation will follow in the next issue.

The Executive Secretary has appeared for the Board of World Peace before both the Senate and House Armed Services Committees in opposition to Universal Military Training; before the Senate Judiciary Committee in opposition to the Bricker Amendment; before the President's Commission on immigration legislation; and filed documents in favor of relief for specified countries before both Senate and House Appropriation Committees.

THE REPORT ON CONSCIENTIOUS OBJECTORS

Information as of December 9, 1953, indicates that as of that date there were 198 conscientious objectors at work in 41 different Methodist service projects under the alternate service program approved by Selective Service. Of this number, 78 were employed by Goodwill Industries, 109 by Methodist hospitals, 7 by children's homes, 2 by homes for the aged, and 2 by the Board of Missions. Of the 198, only eight were Methodists, the great majority being Mennonites or Brethren.

As of December 28, 1953, there were 39 Methodist conscientious objectors working in all approved projects. In all, 99 Methodist projects in 31 states and the District of Columbia have been approved by Selective Service for the employment of conscientious objectors.

H.W.

WORLD ORDER OBSERVANCE AT GRACE CHURCH

Last October on World Order Sunday the peace committee of Grace Methodist Church in Saint Louis sponsored a strong program. In the afternoon and evening about seventy persons came together to discuss human rights, armaments, the United Nations, and international goodwill.

Local churchmen: Dr. Frank Wright of Washington University, Dr. Edwin Dahlberg of the Delmar Avenue Baptist Church, Rev. Wilburn Yoder, pastor and member of the general Board of World Peace, and Rev. Wesley Hager of Grace Methodist Church, spoke and led discussions.

Those present agreed that membership in the United Nations should be universal, that this nation should ratify the Conventions on Genocide and Human Rights, that the veto power in the U.N. should be limited, and that non-governmental programs of mercy should be continued.

T. W. Hardy, Jr., President of the Hardy Salt Company, as chairman of the peace committe of Grace Methodist Church, gave direction to the conference. His committee has subscribed to fifteen copies of the COURIER -- for distribution among committee members and local church officials.

C.D.S.

WE CALL TO YOUR ATTENTION

The United Nations: Facts and Fallacies

A Church Peace Union pamphlet which presents the correct answer to some of the most serious but mistaken criticisms of the U.N. Single copy free, $1.00 per 100.

Don't Be Fooled

A cartoon pamphlet which deals with some of the organizations attacking the United Nations, and which answers their criticisms. Circulated by the Woman's Division of Christian Service. 5¢ per copy.

Must Churches Fight Congress for Freedom?

A sermon by Dr. Harold A. Bosley which deals with the relation of the churches to Congressional investigations. 5¢ each, 50¢ per dozen.

Youth Peace Packet

A selection of materials of special value to young people in planning a program of Christian study and action on the issues of peace. Price 75¢.

Local Church Packet

A selection of leaflets and pamphlets which are of special concern and help to local church committees and groups planning a program of study and action for peace. Price 35¢.

Order from the Board of World Peace, 740 Rush Street, Chicago 11, Illinois.